



COUNTY OF WARREN

**Parks, Recreation & Greenways Plan
Draft - March 2021**



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This plan was prepared by the Warren County Parks and Recreation Plan Steering Committee, who dedicated their time and efforts to ensuring that the future of parks and recreation in Warren County will meet the demands of a changing community.

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The planning process was facilitated by planning consultant Mackin with assistance from James Watenpool, CPRP.



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A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO GARY LESTER FOR PROVIDING PHOTOGRAPHS USED IN THE PLAN.



Warren/North Warren Bike Trail
Located along the banks of the Conewango Creek, the open three-mile segment of the trail follows the old New York Central branch north from the City of Warren. Beginning at the north end of East Street in downtown Warren, the trail leads north out of town, following the banks of the quiet Conewango Creek. As the trail continues north, it leaves the creek and enters a busy commercial section along Route 62. The trail is sufficiently removed from the highway, creating a nice buffer from the traffic. The trail ends near a beautiful town park that has picnic areas, a garden, parking and restrooms.



CONEWANGO CREEK
Conewango is an Iroquois name meaning "below the cliffs." The Conewango Creek was the waterway trail leading to the "Forbidden Path" of the Seneca Nation, so called because it was guarded so carefully and it was a direct line to the "Land of Lakes", their special domain. In the 1800's, the creek became a logging highway as vast lumber rafts were lashed together and floated downstream to Pittsburgh for sale. Today, the Conewango is still rural and wild, a haven for wildlife, and for those who wish to paddle back in time.



Horses being used to move logs, the prime moving power in the woods.



Getting logs to water.



Maneuvering a raft through shallow waters.



Last Square Timber Raft, made up of pieces from the Conewango - 1900. Three oars at each end indicate that it is a river raft.

FROM THE FORESTS TO THE SAWMILLS TO MARKET

In the early 1800's, sawmills began springing up along the waterways of northwestern Pennsylvania in response to growing demand for dimensional building lumber. Transporting the cut timber from forest to sawmill was dangerous work and no easy task. Working in teams, early lumberjacks (also known as "jobbers") clear-cut all worthwhile dimension trees of Eastern White Pine. Utilizing sturdy teams of horses and/or oxen, they then skidded, trailed or slid logs to a staging area along the banks of the stream. From there, the logs were rolled into the stream and floated to sawmills. The Conewango Creek served as a highway for transporting squared timber rafts and sawn lumber rafts to downstream markets. The standard sawn lumber raft was a platform assembled from alternating courses of 16 foot boards between a bottom and top frame joined together by "grubs", which were young saplings with roots. On the Conewango Creek, the standard raft was ten (10) platforms long and one (1) platform wide, approximately 170 feet long by 17 feet wide with one oar at each end. Where the Conewango entered the Allegheny River at Warren, 6 of the 10 platform "strings" would be coupled together to form an "Allegheny Raft" approximately 340 feet long and 51 feet wide, with three oars or sweeps at each end. Because of their size, rafts could be launched only in times of high water, which was generally in the spring of the year following snow melt.

Historic photos provided by:
The Warren Public Library and,
The Warren County Historical Society



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES



RESOLUTION TO GO HERE

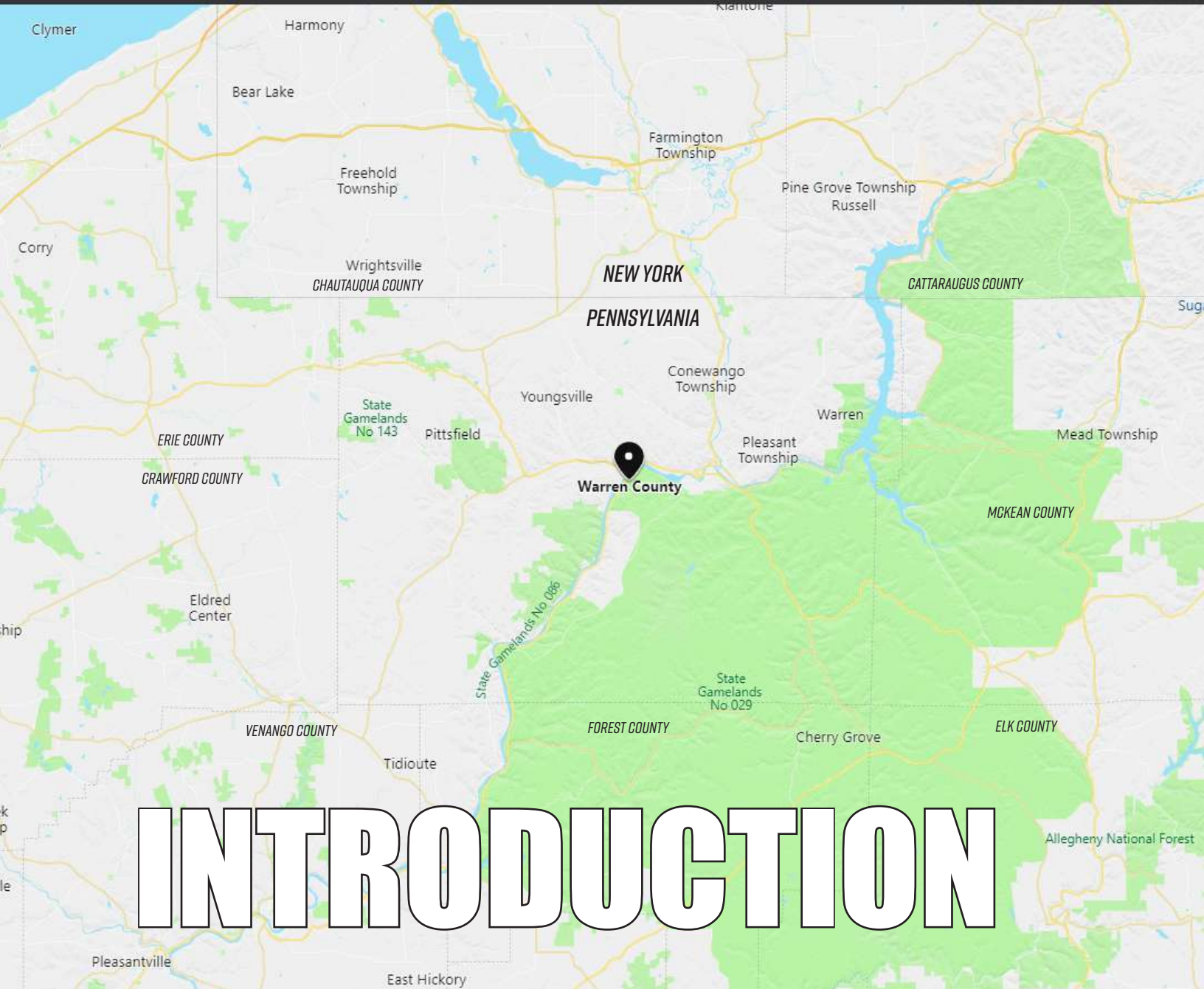
RESOLUTION



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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND, PROCESS, DEMOGRAPHICS

Warren County is located in northwest Pennsylvania, east of the City of Erie and south of Jamestown, NY along the New York border. It is bordered on the north by New York State, on the east by McKean County, on the west by Crawford and Erie Counties, and on the south by Venango and Forest Counties. Major thoroughfares include US Route 6 and US Route 62. Initially established from portions of Lycoming and Allegheny Counties by an act of legislature in 1800, it was separated from Venango County in 1819 and became the County as it stands today.

The economy of Warren County has its roots in the abundance of natural resources found within its borders. One of the first industries was lumber, as a result of the hardwood forest in the western portion of the county and large stands of pine and hemlock southeast of the Allegheny River. The river and its three major tributaries in Warren county—the Conewango, Brokenstraw and Kinzua Creeks—were natural waterways for the rafting of lumber throughout the 1800s.

Planning in Warren County dates back to at least 1967 with the adoption of the Warren County General Plan. The County updated this plan in 1992 and again in 2005. Other planning efforts include the North Warren Trail Feasibility Study in 2002 and the County Greenways Plan in 2009.

In terms of recreation, the 2005 Comprehensive Plan recommended the extension of the Warren/ North Warren Bike/Hike Trail north to the New York State line and the creation of a bikeway in Youngsville Borough and Brokenstraw Township. At the time of the 2005 Plan, the County had recently appointed a Recreation Director, but that position has since been eliminated (approximately seven years ago).

Warren County adopted its first Greenways Plan in 2009 as part of the larger Northwest Pennsylvania Greenways Planning effort undertaken by the Northwest Regional Planning and Development Commission. The Northwest Pennsylvania Greenways planning process was a multi-county effort completed for the Commission's eight counties, and included individual plans for six counties, including Erie County, Clarion County, Crawford County, Forest County, Venango County and Warren County.

A HISTORY OF RECREATION

The same natural resources that brought settlers to Warren County in the 1800s and built the early economy are what provides the abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities today. In a word: lumber.

But between 1890 and 1930 a new enterprise, the wood chemical industry, changed the course of forest development in the region. Wood chemical plants provided a market for virtually every size, species and quality of tree growing on the Allegheny Plateau. Harvests during this era were

the most complete ever made in the area, clearing nearly every accessible tree of every size. The once vast forest of the Allegheny Plateau was almost completely removed. Many large forest landowners in Pennsylvania simply abandoned the land. In 1911, the United States Congress passed the Weeks Act, allowing the federal government to buy land for the establishment of National Forests. The Allegheny National Forest was established in 1923.

IN WARREN COUNTY

Pennsylvania also began to acquire land with a goal to build a state park “within 25 miles of every resident and Chapman State Park opened in 1951.”¹

In the 1960’s and 70s, the focus shifted towards long distance hiking trails. The National Trails System Act of 1968 was passed, and in 1980, the North Country National Scenic Trail was created.²

In 1992, the Middle Allegheny River was given a “recreational” classification under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to reflect the relatively high level of accessibility and development, when compared with other rivers in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. However, the middle Allegheny is still considered a primitive river.

¹ “History of PA State Parks.” Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Retrieved online October 2016. www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/thinkstoknow/history/thefirstpark/index.htm.

² North Country Trail Association History. Retrieved online October 2016. <https://northcountrytrail.org/trail/history/> Retrieved online October 2016.

1819

Separated from Venango County, Warren County is established as it stands today. One of the first industries was lumber, as a result of the hardwood forest in the western portion of the county and large stands of pine and hemlock southeast of the Allegheny River.

1923

The Allegheny National Forest (ANF) is Pennsylvania’s only National Forest. The ANF is composed of plateau tops with elevations up to approximately 2,300 feet and valleys down to approximately 1,000 feet above sea level. The forest is approximately 517,000 acres and includes land in Elk, Forest, McKean and Warren counties.

1951

Chapman State Park opens, a 862-acre park in Pleasant Township, home to the 68-acre Chapman Lake. After Valley Forge opened as Pennsylvania’s first state park in 1893, the state focused on acquiring land with the goal to build a state park “within 25 miles of every resident.”

1989

The Lumber Heritage Region is created through the Department of Community Affairs as one of eight nascent heritage parks in Pennsylvania and planning efforts begin.

2009

Warren County adopts its first Greenways Plan, as part of the larger 8-county Northwest Pennsylvania Greenways Planning effort undertaken by the Northwest Regional Planning and Development Commission.

1860s

The economy begins to shift, when oil is discovered in Titusville, concurrent with the arrival of the railroad. In short time, Warren County was in the midst of an oil boom, with drilling occurring in numerous locations, including Tidioute, Cherry Grove, and Clarendon.

1930s

In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps changed the face of National Forests by building hundreds of recreation facilities, including Twin Lakes and Loleta Recreation Areas on the ANF. These and other facilities became popular after World War II when newly mobile families discovered the joys of outdoor recreation.

1965

The creation of the Allegheny Reservoir when the Kinzua Dam was completed brought the most dramatic change to developed recreation on the ANF. Within ten years, a tremendous development program resulted in campgrounds, boat launches, beaches, picnic areas, hiking trails and overlooks around the reservoir shoreline and elsewhere throughout the forest.

2003

The Pennsylvania Wilds Conservation Landscape was created to help revitalize rural communities through sustainable tourism development, all while inspiring a stewardship ethic in residents and visitors.

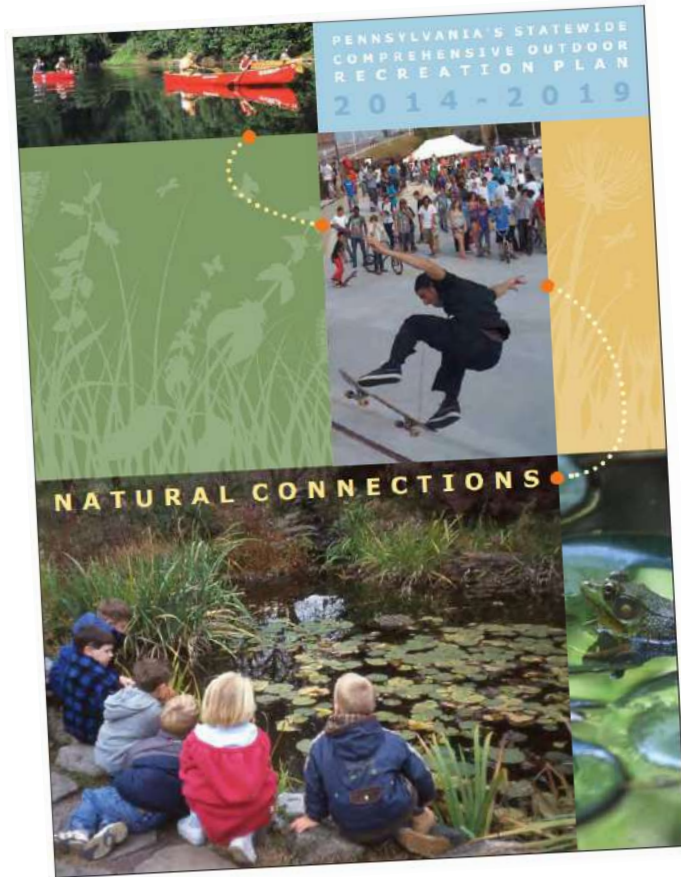
2019

Warren County gets a grant from PA DCNR to update its Greenways Plan as part of a countywide Parks and Recreation Plan.

PA RECREATION PLAN

Pennsylvania completes a statewide outdoor recreation plan (SCORP) every five years. DCNR completed their 2020-2024 Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan which was finalized in 2020.

The Warren County Parks, Recreation and Greenways Plan was developed with these goals and principles in mind.



PRIORITY • HEALTH & WELLNESS
promoting healthy living through outdoor connections

- >> Educate on the connection between health and outdoor recreation
- >> Support programs that connect health and outdoor recreation
- >> Equip healthcare professionals with the tools needed to promote the health benefits of outdoor recreation
- >> Create walking and biking networks that provide safe, close-to-home access to recreation and encourage healthy behavior in communities

PRIORITY • RECREATION FOR ALL
ensuring equity in access to Pennsylvania's outdoors

- >> Provide opportunities for everyone to regularly engage in outdoor recreation
- >> Create recreational amenities that fit the needs and expectations of underserved communities
- >> Provide equitable access to outdoor recreation and conservation programs and places
- >> Build a more diverse workforce and volunteer base to provide outdoor and conservation programs and opportunities

PRIORITY • SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS
protecting and adapting our resources

- >> Address infrastructure and maintenance needs in Pennsylvania's existing outdoor recreation areas
- >> Adapt public lands and facilities to address the impacts of climate change on outdoor recreation
- >> Foster stewardship for Pennsylvania's recreation areas and natural, cultural and historic resources
- >> Design outdoor recreation areas to minimize impacts on the environment and conflicts among user groups

PRIORITY • TECHNOLOGY
using new tools to improve engagement

- >> Increase mobile connectivity in outdoor recreation areas
- >> Develop best practices for emerging outdoor recreation technologies
- >> Use technologies to support health goals and find places to recreate outdoors
- >> Enrich the understanding of the natural, cultural and historic aspects of the outdoors through technology

PRIORITY • FUNDING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
elevating outdoor recreation

- >> Protect and expand public and private investments in outdoor recreation
- >> Build strategic coalitions to maximize the economic impacts of outdoor recreation in Pennsylvania
- >> Market Pennsylvania as an outdoor destination
- >> Demonstrate the benefits and impacts of nature-based solutions to addressing community needs

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARKS

We know that there is a relationship between the physical environment and the overall physical health of residents. How does Warren County compare to other counties in Pennsylvania? Are there areas, specifically related to recreation, where the County can influence positive outcomes? Specifically, the County Parks and Recreation Plan can help address:

- The availability of and access to recreation areas and active transportation with adult obesity and physical health.
- The preservation of open space, greenways and natural resources with reduced pollution an increased healthy environment.

The goal is to improve the health of Warren County by improving access to and use of the resources that already exist to support sustainable lifestyles. This means continued attention to development of a green infrastructure network, coordinated investment in land protection, expansion of the reach of resources and empowering the public to live well.

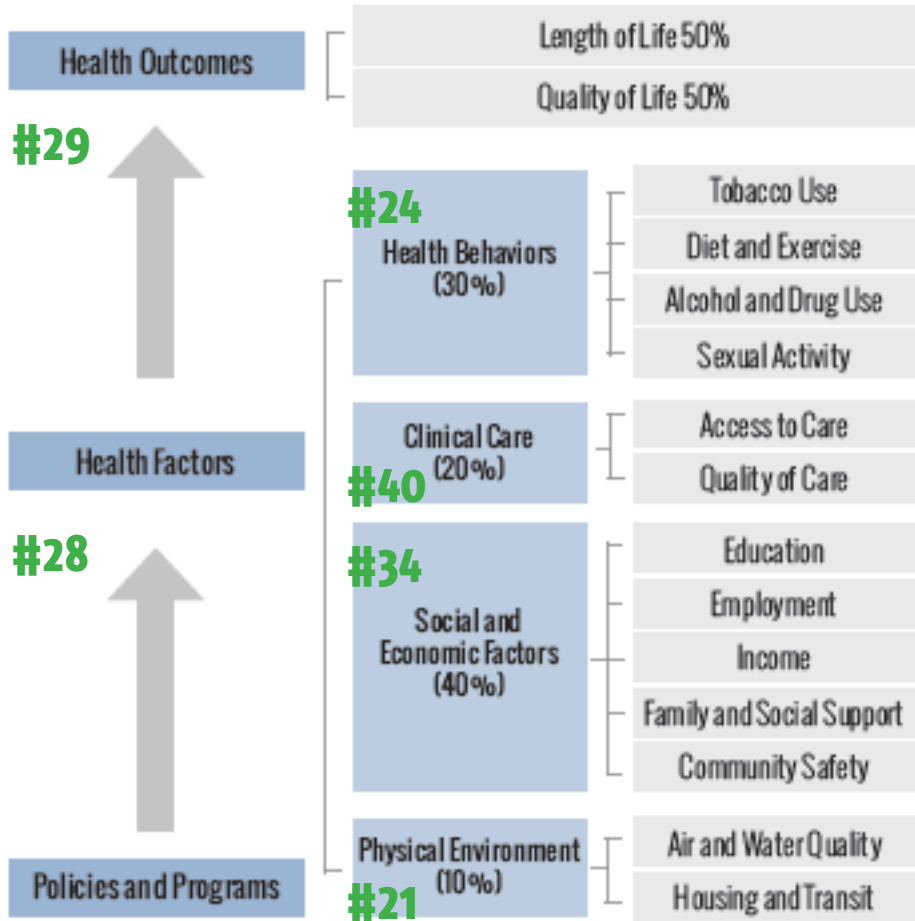
COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

All 67 of Pennsylvania’s counties are ranked in terms of their overall health through two main factors: Health Outcomes and Health Factors.

In terms of **Health Outcomes**, Warren County ranks 29 (of 67): 16th for length of life and 53rd

PA COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS:

HOW DOES WARREN COUNTY COMPARE?



for quality of life. According to the rankings, Warren County has a low rate of premature deaths (before age 75) but lower rates of quality of life. Residents reported a higher number of poor physical health days and overall poor or fair health than other counties in Pennsylvania.

Looking at the **Health Factors**, Warren County ranks 28 (of 67), with the specific areas as follows:

Health Behaviors – 24th. Factors contributing to this ranking include:

- Smoking (16% compared to 18% in PA)
- Adult obesity (32% compared to 30%)
- Food environment index (limited access to healthy foods and food insecurity) – the County is on par with the state
- Physical inactivity (23% compared to 22%)
- Access to exercise opportunities (80% compared to 84%)

Clinical Care – 40th. Warren County ranks low compared to other Pennsylvania counties for the ratio of population to primary care providers and flu vaccinations.

Social and Economic Factors – 34th. Areas where the County is doing comparably well include high school graduation rate (92% compared to 87% in PA); social associations, which is the number of membership associations per 10,000 population (18.2 compared to 12.3); and violent crime (186 compared to 315). Areas of concern include a higher rate of unemployment (5.3% compared to 4.9%) and children in poverty (25% compared to 17%).

Physical Environment – 21st. Positive measures include: lower air pollution, low percentage of residents with severe housing problems (10% compared to 15%) and lower percentage of long commutes (22% compared to 36%). Warren County does have a much higher rate of residents who drive alone to work (82% compared to 76%).

“Your **address** can play an **important** role in how long you **live** and how **healthy** you are. The physical design of your **community** affects your health every time you step out your front door. Sometimes making **healthy choices is not easy** — being physically active is hard if you do not have **access to sidewalks or parks**, and eating right is hard if healthy foods are not available. Your input on **land use decisions** in your community can help make **everyone happier and healthier.**”

— Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 20206 (www.cdc.gov/features/healthy communities/)

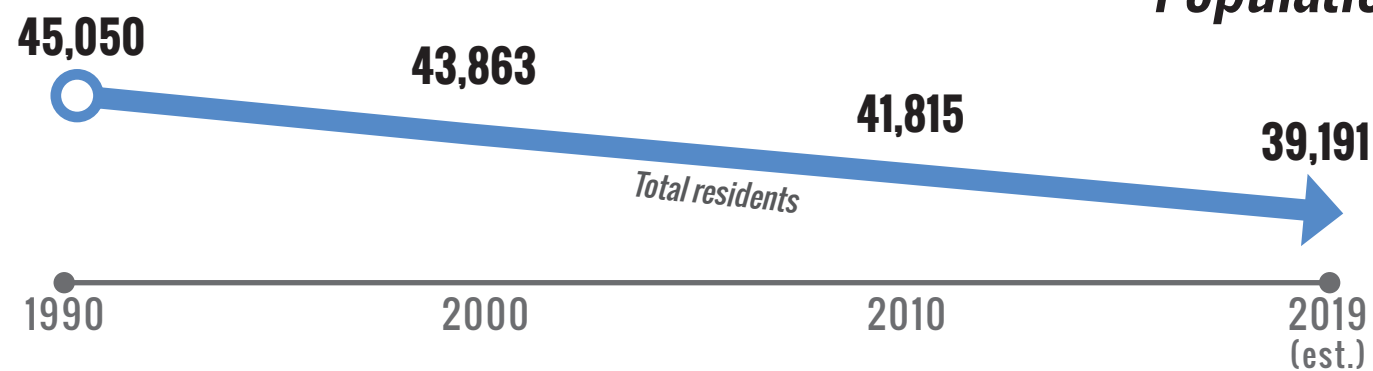
COUNTY SNAPSHOT

WHO LIVES HERE?

Warren County's population peaked in 1970 at 47,682, after a slow but steady growth since 1890. Since then, the County has experienced a gradual population decline. Warren is the least diverse of all of the surrounding counties (Crawford, Forest, McKean and Venango in Pennsylvania and Cattaraugus and Chautauqua in New York), with 97.7% of the population classified as white.



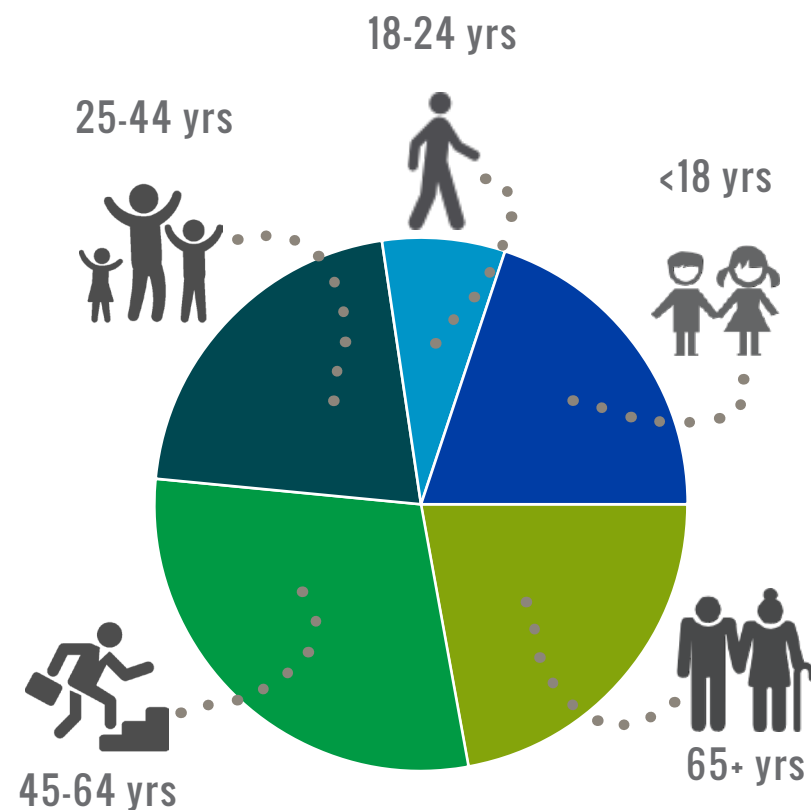
Population



47
MEDIAN AGE

The median age in Warren County is 47, compared to 40 in Pennsylvania. It is also the highest median age as compared to the surrounding counties.

The largest age group is comprised of persons ages 45-64, followed by persons 65 years and over. The smallest age group is 18-24, which is not surprising with no colleges located in the County.



HOUSEHOLDS

Warren County Household Facts:

2.3 persons per household

65% of all households are families

13% of all households have a female head of household, compared to 18% in PA

91.4% lived in same house one year ago

73.6%
HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A
BROADBAND INTERNET
SUBSCRIPTION



And 83.9% have a computer

12.3%
LIVE WITH A DISABILITY

(under 65 years of age)

Warren County: At a Glance



Population: 39,191
(rank #55/67 PA counties)



Land area: 884 sq. miles
(rank #16 / 67 PA counties)



Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 19.3%



Households: 17,080



Median household income: \$48,409



Median Housing Value: \$95,400



Adult Obesity: 32%
(PA = 38%)



Physical Inactivity: 23%
(PA = 22%)

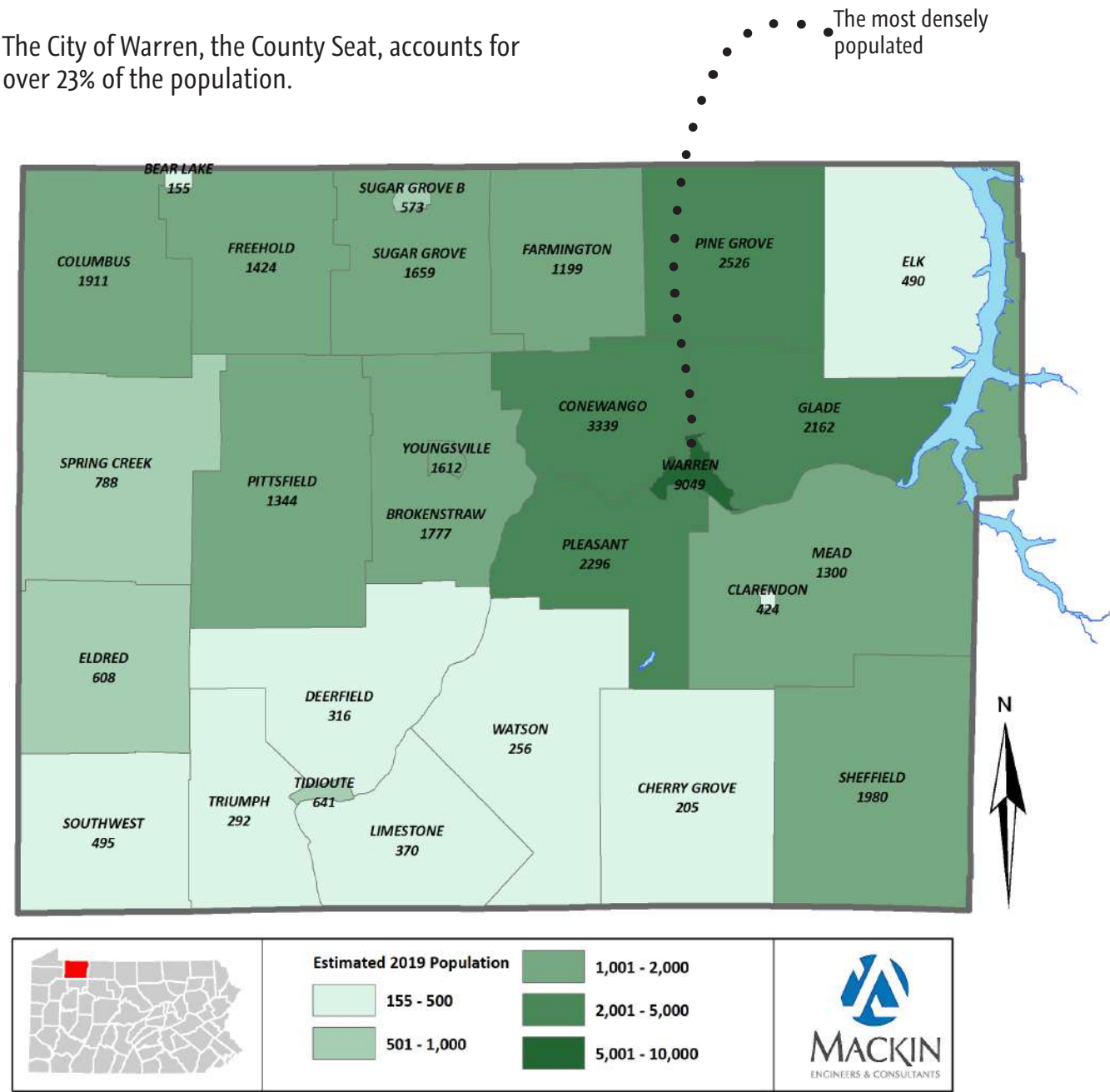


Access to Exercise Opportunities: 80%
(PA = 84%)

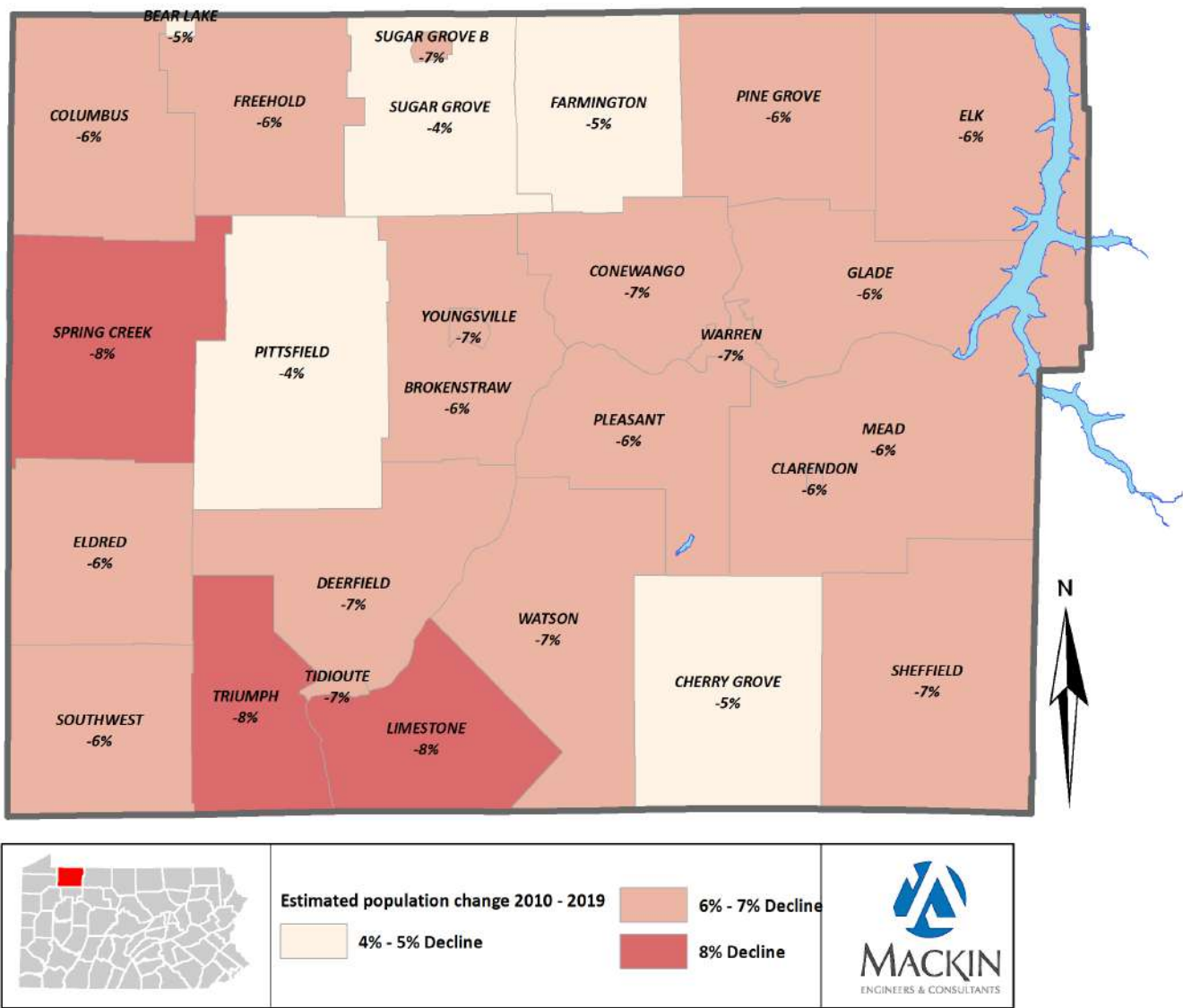
WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

Warren County is home to 27 municipalities: one third class city (Warren), five boroughs and 21 second class townships.

The City of Warren, the County Seat, accounts for over 23% of the population.



The county population has steadily decreased in all Warren municipalities over the last 30 years. Populations usually decline because there were fewer births, or because residents migrate to other areas. Whatever the reason, local governments are faced with the effects of population decline, which can include a need for less recreation facilities and programs or different types of recreation. The area's needs essentially change, and so a government should consider this when reviewing their plans. Below is a look at the decline in all of Warren's 27 municipalities.



THE PLANNING PROCESS

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

While the County does not own or maintain any public parks or recreation facilities, with the exception of the North Warren Bike Trail, the County recognized the need to be proactive and undertake a countywide parks, recreation and trails/greenways plan. The overall goals of this plan are to assess the need for additional recreation opportunities in the County over the next 10 years and to serve as a recreation plan for all 27 municipalities.

Warren County applied for and received a grant from Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) to complete a parks, recreation and greenways plan for the County and a separate plan for the City of Warren (as such, all park and recreation information for the City is included in that plan and not here).

In 2019, Warren County retained Mackin Engineering Company, with Jim Watenpool (CPRP), to complete the parks, recreation and greenways plan. The County formed an Advisory Committee at the onset of the planning process

to oversee plan development. The Committee was comprised of representatives from the County, municipalities, school district, state agencies and local residents.

Project meetings were held at key intervals throughout the process. In-person meetings were held in June, September and December of 2019 and virtual meetings in 2020 (due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

The Advisory Committee was used to document existing conditions (including identifying local parks throughout the County), review park analysis and findings, plan public input methods and help to develop/review plan recommendations.

The planning team collecting data and community input in order to identify the County's key issues and needs related to parks, trails and recreation.

In September 2019, municipal questionnaires were sent to all 27 municipalities to collect data on local parks, trails and river access; recreation planning efforts; and potential opportunities that the planning team should explore. The questionnaires were also used to ensure that the elected officials for all of the municipalities in the County had an opportunity to participate in the planning process. 21 completed surveys were returned.

As part of this process, the planning team visited over 55 parks and trails throughout the County and conducted numerous interviews with municipal officials and key stakeholders (see list to the right). In addition, the Plan included a review and analysis of the previous Greenways Plan.

Stakeholders interviewed as part of plan:

- Allegheny Community Center
- Allegheny National Forest
- Allegheny Outdoor Club
- Allegheny Outfitters
- Boy Scouts of America
- Brokenstraw Valley Foundation
- Conewango Creek Watershed Association
- General Joseph Warren Chapter - DAR
- Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania
- Jefferson DeFrees Family Center
- Leadership Warren
- Northern Allegheny Mountain Bike Association
- PA Game Commission
- Penn Soil RC&D
- Rotary Club of Warren
- Salvation Army
- Snowmobile Club
- Warren Area Student Union
- Warren County 4-H
- Warren County Chamber of Business & Industry
- Warren County Conservation District
- Warren County Master Gardener Program
- Warren County Special Olympics
- Warren County Soccer
- Warren County Visitors Bureau
- Warren County Youth Baseball Softball Association
- Warren County Youth Football League
- Warren County Fairgrounds
- Warren Cycle Shop (aka Jock Shop)
- Warren General Hospital / Cancer Center
- Warren Public Library
- Warren YMCA



ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
- Gary Lester

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Gathering public input was a key part of developing the Warren County Parks, Recreation and Greenways Plan.

MUNICIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

A survey was sent to all municipalities to gather information on current staffing levels, issues pertaining to recreation, existing recreation facilities and programs, and any future plans regarding new facilities or programs (or updates to existing facilities and programs).

COG MEETING

The Warren County Council of Governments (COG) represents 20 of the 27 municipalities. To supplement the municipal questionnaires, planning consultants attended the August 2019 COG meeting to introduce the plan and gather public input regarding any current/planned recreation projects and identify any potential projects/priorities for the municipalities.

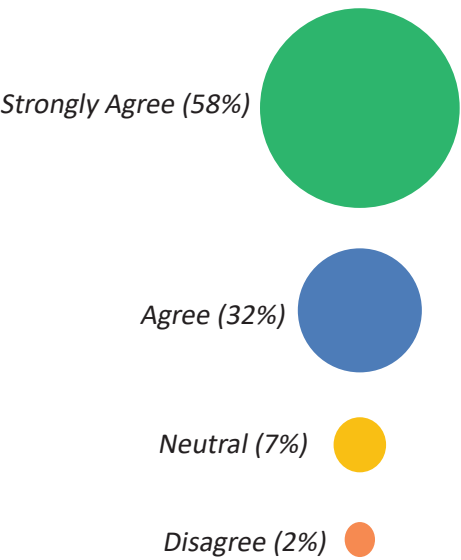
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

With help from the Advisory Committee, a stakeholder list was prepared to include organizations and providers of recreation in the County. These stakeholders were then interviewed to gather additional data regarding existing conditions and needs in terms of recreation in the County. A list of stakeholders is included on page 21 and a summary of the interviews can be found in the Appendices.

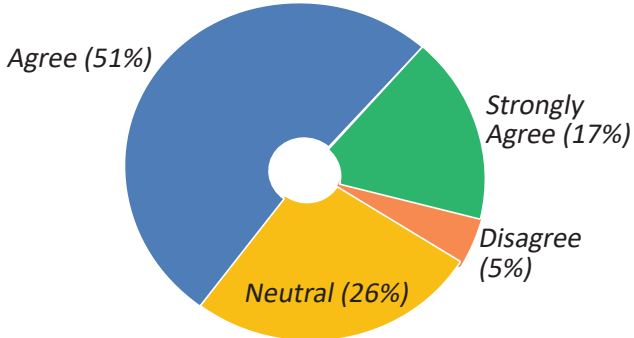
PUBLIC SURVEY

Almost 400 people completed an online survey asking for opinions as to what should be addressed regarding recreation in Warren County. The survey was publicized through the local newspaper, an advertisement in the Warren County Guide (mailed to every County household) and made available at Little League registration in January/February 2020. The Warren County Visitors Bureau provided four gift cards to local restaurants, which were distributed through a random drawing of survey participants.

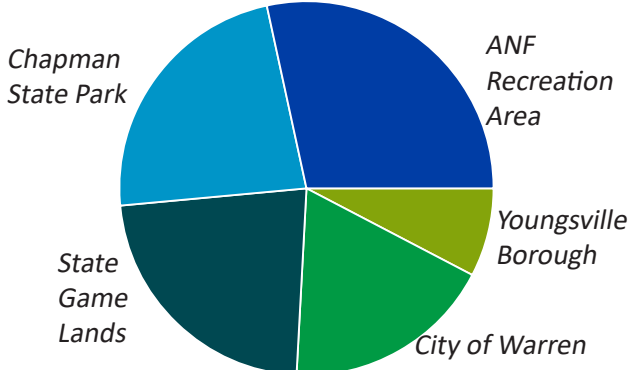
Importance of Parks and Recreation to Maintaining a High Quality of Life:



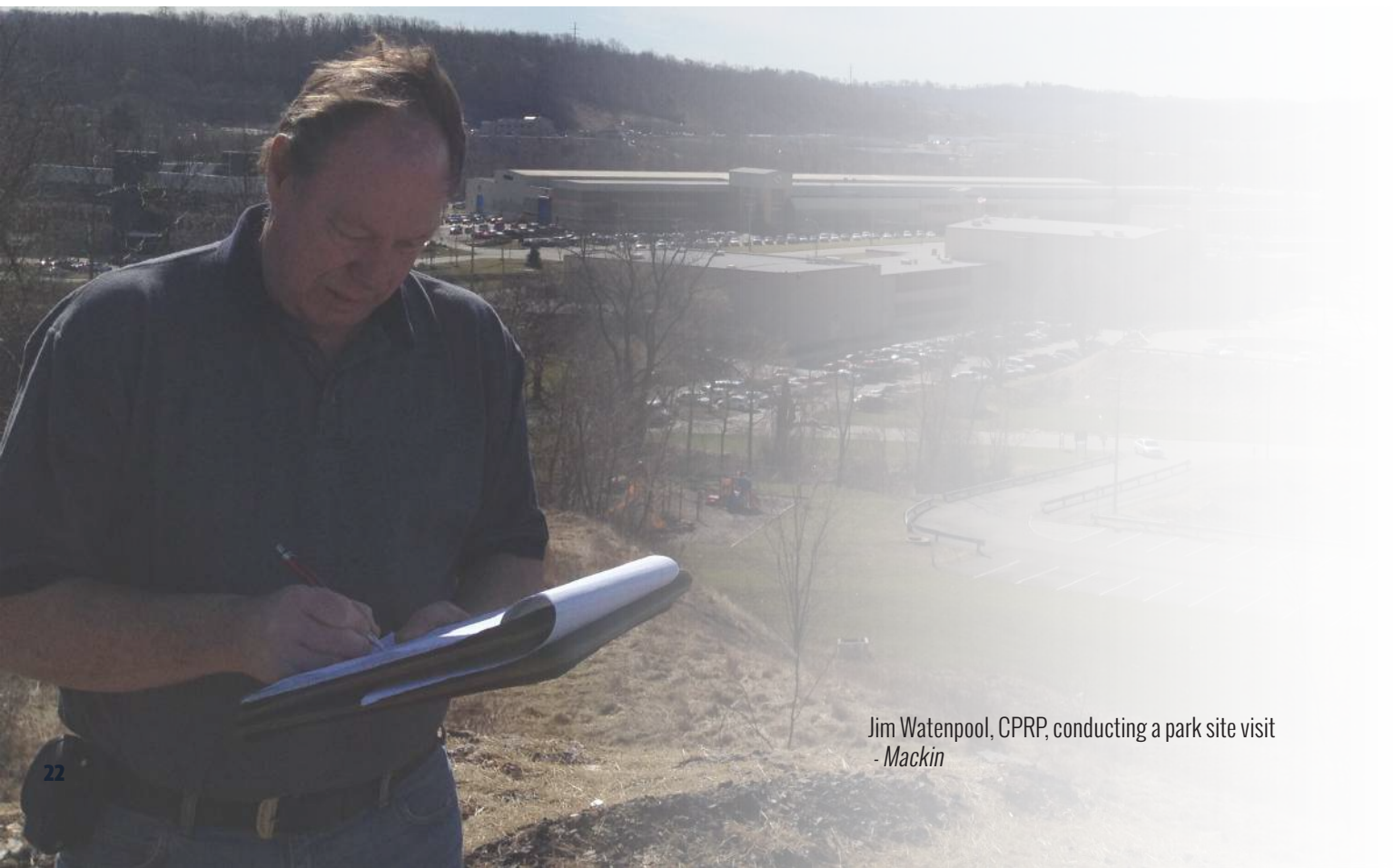
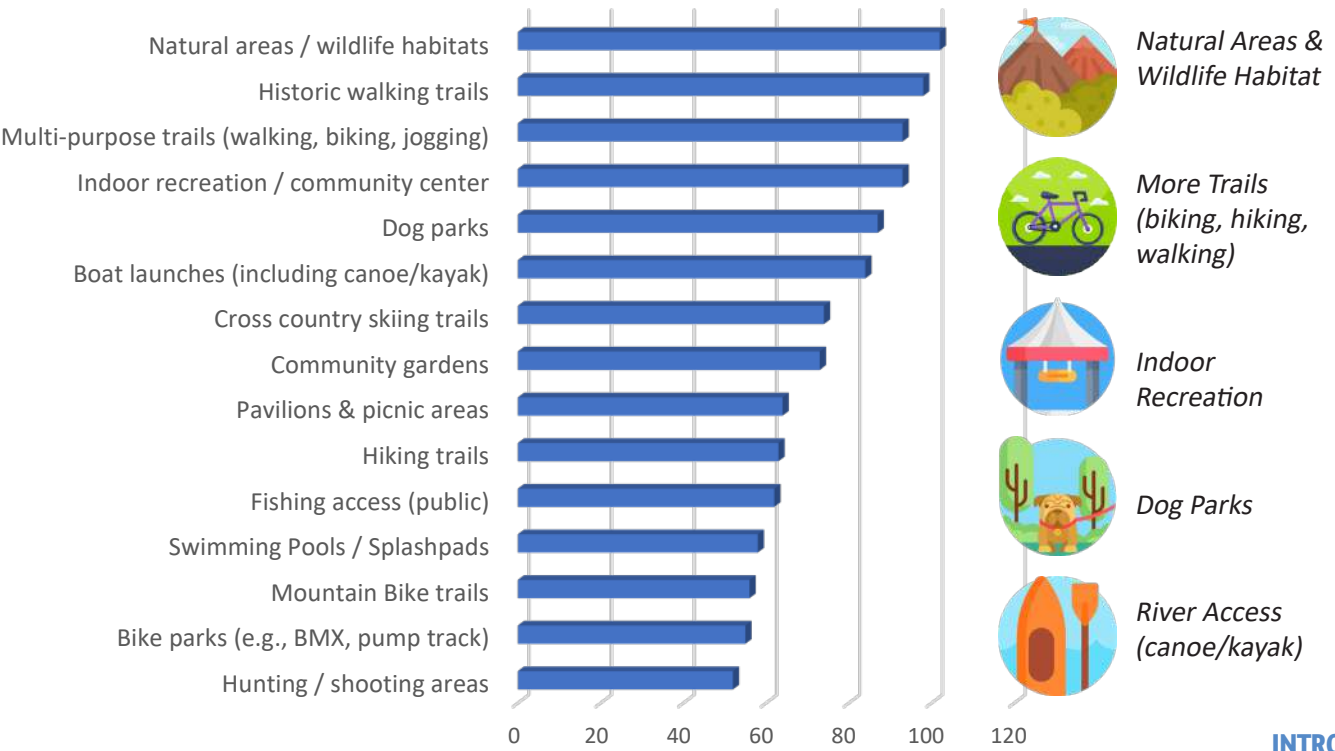
Warren County is well-served by public parks and recreation facilities/programs:



Most visited parks and recreation facilities:



Parks & Recreation Facilities MOST Needed:



Jim Watenpool, CPRP, conducting a park site visit
- Mackin

COUNTY VISION & GOALS

THE VISION FOR WARREN COUNTY IS TO:

Provide a countywide network of parks, recreation and trails/greenways that meets the diverse needs of residents and tourists.

THE CORE VALUES ARE:

- Conservation – value open space and greenways that are not for human disturbance; preserve natural areas and resources.
- Stewardship – value effective and sustainable management and usage of parks and open space.
- Connectivity – value providing a network of multi-modal trails throughout the county.
- Quality of Life – value providing parks and recreation to enhance the quality of life for residents.
- Tourism – value the economic benefit of tourism from recreation and natural areas.
- Health – value improving access to parks and recreation programs to improve the overall health of residents.
- Cooperation & Partnerships – value developing partnerships to ensure that parks and recreation meet the demand and needs without duplicating efforts.

Three priority goals were developed for the County to support the vision and core values. Action items for each goal are summarized here and explained in more detail on the following pages

GOAL 1: CREATE A SYSTEM WHEREBY THE COUNTY SERVES AS THE CENTRAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR PARKS AND RECREATION IN THE COUNTY.

- 1.1.

Expand the capacity of Warren County to provide/manage parks and recreation.
- 1.2.

Develop a marketing plan for parks and recreation in the County.
- 1.3.

Provide technical assistance to the municipalities for recreation planning and financing.
- 1.4.

Provide education to municipalities and residents on the importance of recreation, conservation and environmental stewardship.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE AN INTERCONNECTED NETWORK OF PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE THAT SUPPORTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION.

- 2.1.

Continue developing a countywide trail network.
- 2.2.

Provide more public access to the Allegheny River and other waterways for fishing, boating and other types of recreation.
- 2.3.

Promote winter activities.
- 2.4.

Develop partnerships with County organizations to provide and expand recreation.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE, COORDINATE, FACILITATE, OR PROVIDE RECREATION PROGRAMS THAT SERVE REGIONAL NEEDS.

- 3.1.

Develop a plan to provide and promote recreational County-wide programming and implement locally.



HIKER
- Gary Lester

OBJECTIVE 1.1 EXPAND THE CAPACITY OF WARREN COUNTY TO OVERSEE PARK & RECREATION

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

It's been mentioned throughout this document that Warren County does not own or manage any parks, however, there are many parks, trails, and facilities that are located within the county's physical jurisdiction. As leisure activities can bring joy to residents and tourism dollars into the communities, and as the Covid-19 pandemic found many more people spending time outdoors, it is important to find avenues which allow the county to have an increased capacity to oversee parks and recreation in their communities. So residents should also be able to have a local source of communication when they need to discuss issues, ideas, or want to help improve upon the parks. Communication with a local representative can more quickly address any issues or implement any new programs.

ACTION 1.1A. DIVIDE THE COUNTY INTO GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

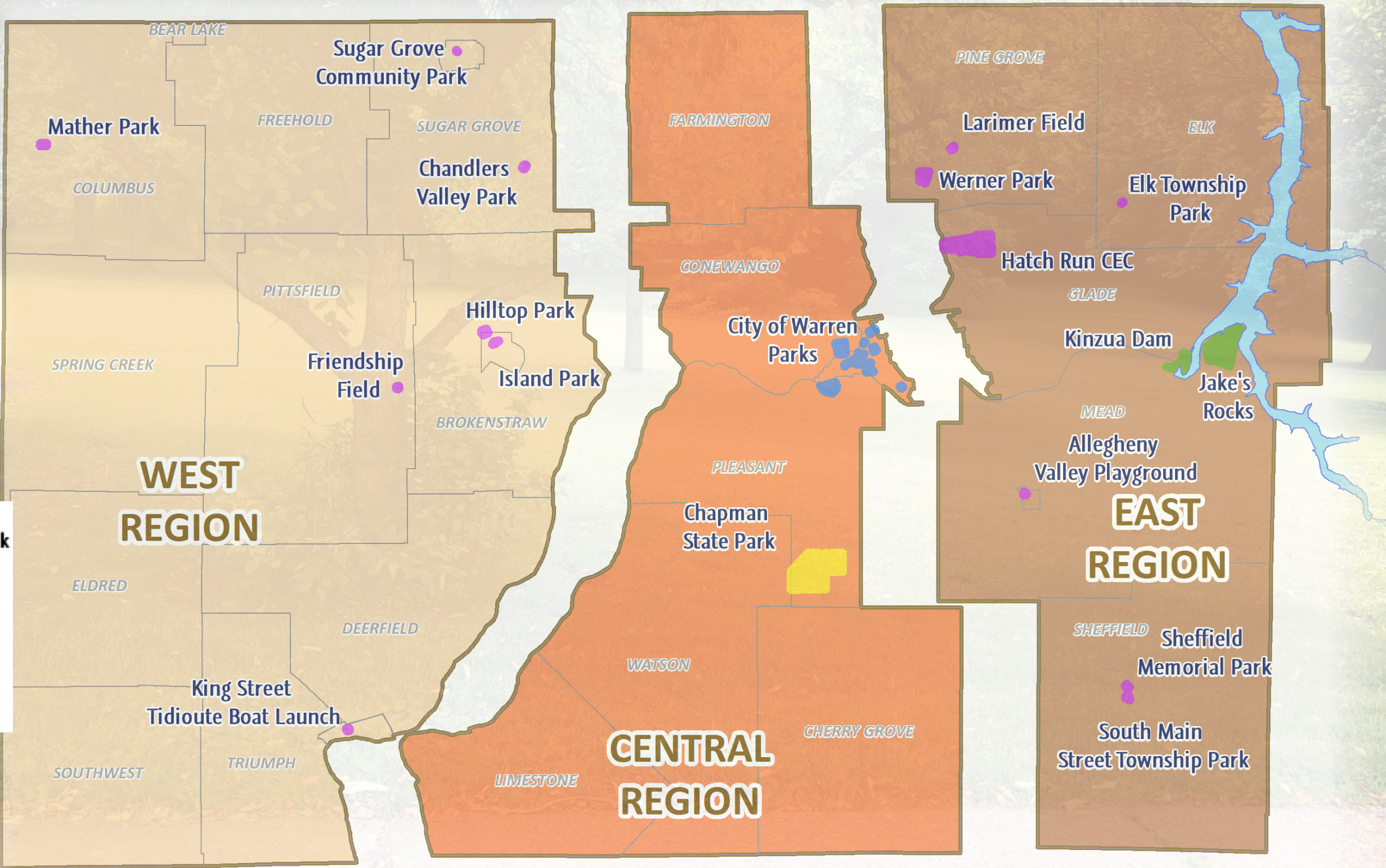
It would be prudent to divide the county into regions centered around municipal and other larger regional parks. This would help more rural areas to have a separate focus than that of the populated area surrounding the City of Warren, or the eastern counties which are heavily populated with lands managed by the Allegheny National Forest. It would also help to market these as regional parks and bring a renewed focus and interest for nearby residents and visitors. While the focus within each region would be parks within that geographic area, these "regional" parks will be marketed and promoted to service different areas of County. The map on pages 28-29 reflects the different regions within Warren County and shows the existing park and recreation facilities within each region.

- **West Region:** Consisting of rural communities, in this region management should focus on finding ways to address underserved areas due to the smaller number of parks, trails, and facilities. This region features Mather Park, Hilltop Park, Island Park, and King Street Tidioute Boat Launch.
- **Central Region:** This area includes the City of Warren and will require cooperating efforts to promote, manage, and maintain the parks and recreation in the region. The focus should be on programming to serve the many different residents throughout the Central Region. This area contains 14 parks within the City of Warren and Chapman State Park.
- **East Region:** The east region contains areas that attract tourists, like Jakes Rocks and the Kinzua Reservoir and focus should be on avenues to increase tourism. This region also contains Larimer Field, Werner Park, Hatch Run Conservation Education Center, Sheffield Memorial Park, and South Main Street Township Park.

BECOME A CENTRAL CLEARINGHOUSE

WARREN COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS MAP

The map below shows the recommended geographic areas within Warren county, east, central, and west. Each region has park facilities and varying needs on which to focus to promote the parks. While the County may not own any of these parks, it certainly can help to promote them, which serves the residents.





ACTION 1.1B. ESTABLISH A WARREN COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Establishing a county parks and recreation board will ensure the focus is given to the parks, trails, and facilities that lie within the county jurisdiction, but can also focus on marketing regional parks discussed previously and assist with grant applications and other technical assistance for local municipalities. The board will have goals that will be updated and reviewed on a timely basis. Additionally, this board will serve as an advisory committee to the County Board of Commissioners.

ACTION 1.1C. CONSIDER CREATING A PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR

When the County decides to expand recreational opportunities, creating a County Parks and Recreation Department would help in management of the parks, trails, and facilities. This would include any potential future programming. The department would be led by a Manager, who answers to the Parks and Recreation Board.

A Parks and Recreation Program Director is responsible for overseeing the recreational programs put out by public and private parks, sports facilities, community centers or other institutions. Often they work on publicity and finances for the programs and manage other individuals. A Parks and Recreation Director will be directly responsible for the success of the programs offered.

It is possible this staff person could be hired under the DCNR Circuit Rider program. Per the Circuit Rider, grants are awarded to initiate new programs and services for county(ies), Council of Governments and/or multi-municipal entities, that individually do not have the financial resources to hire a professional full-time staff person. The Circuit Rider's purpose is to initiate new programs and services in the designated service area. The City of Warren is a potential partner in this program since they do not currently have a park and recreation director either.

ACTION 1.1D. DEVELOP A FORMAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

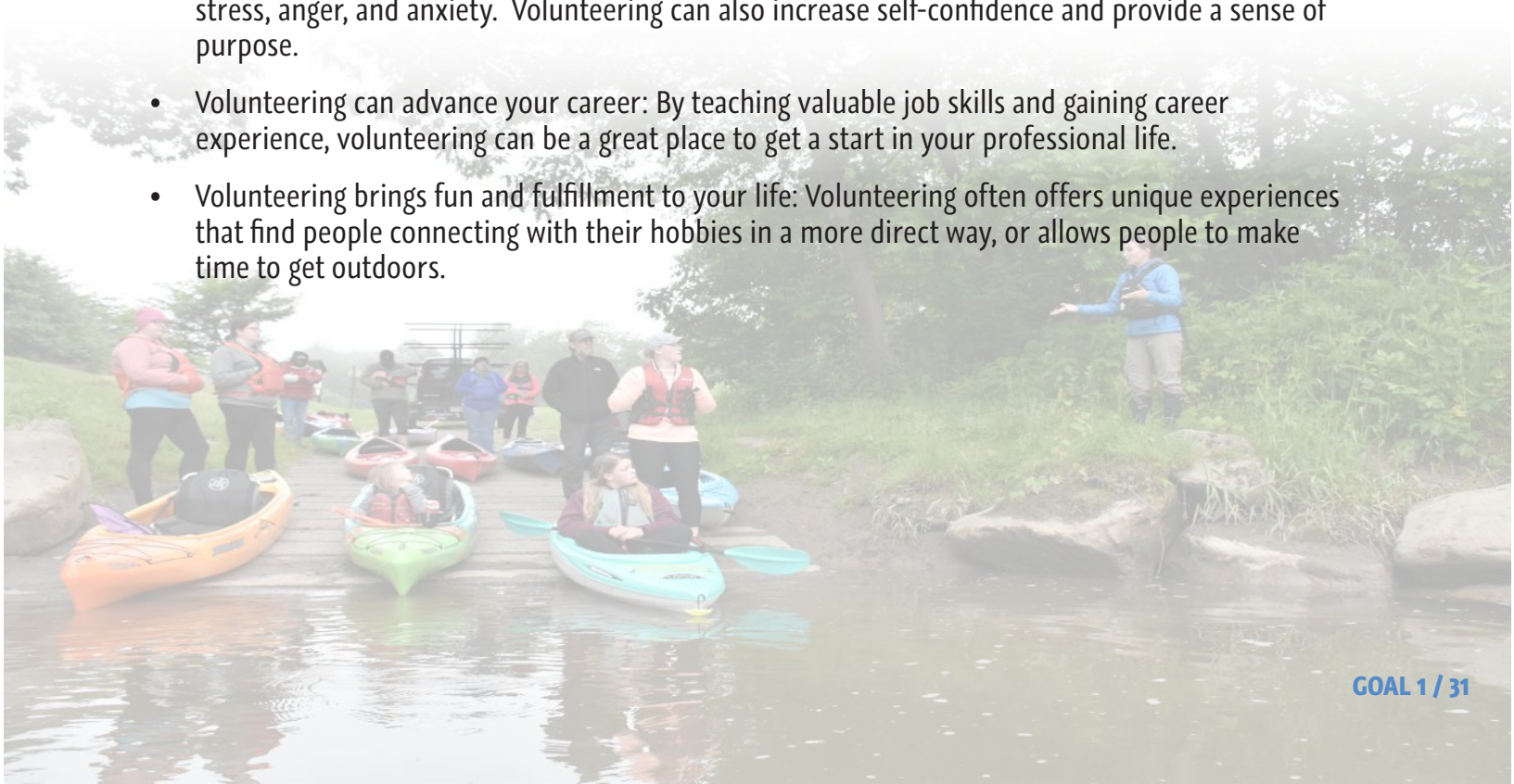
Volunteers are integral to community parks and recreation programs. Often, volunteers can be easily found within the community. Local high schools and colleges can be partners by offering credit for volunteering within certain academic programs. Additionally, retired residents often have the time and interest to stay busy and enjoy having an active role within their community. Many communities have robust volunteer programs.

A volunteer database is helpful to maintain, with contact information and availability. As seasons change, volunteers' availability may fluctuate. For example, students serving in internship volunteer roles may only be available during summer months.

Consideration should be given to partner with the Leadership Warren program. Leadership Warren County is a nine-month curriculum to bring caring, community-minded people together from across the County in an effort to form partnerships to improve the economic vitality and quality of life in Warren County. The program exists to foster a commitment to community trusteeship, and to acquaint participants with the County's resources, assets, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

When attempting to recruit or market the need for volunteers, advertising the many benefits that can be gained from volunteering is crucial. HelpGuide, an independently funded nonprofit organization discusses the 4 ways that volunteering helps people feel healthier and happier. These include:

- Volunteering connects you to others: Making new friends and increasing social and relationship skills are a direct benefit from volunteering.
- Volunteering can combat depression and make one happy and often counteracts the effects of stress, anger, and anxiety. Volunteering can also increase self-confidence and provide a sense of purpose.
- Volunteering can advance your career: By teaching valuable job skills and gaining career experience, volunteering can be a great place to get a start in your professional life.
- Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life: Volunteering often offers unique experiences that find people connecting with their hobbies in a more direct way, or allows people to make time to get outdoors.



OBJECTIVE 1.2 PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND EDUCATION TO MUNICIPALITIES AND RESIDENTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF RECREATION.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Nature conservation is a global issue as topics like air quality and preservation of green space is widely discussed in an exponentially growing word. The benefits of parks and recreation are numerous, from social connections and health benefits to economic benefits. Without educating a community, the benefits can sometimes be overlooked or forgotten. It's important to put those benefits on stage, and continue to educate residents. Doing so will increase interest, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, and lead to more program offerings.

ACTION 1.2A. ENCOURAGE ALL MUNICIPALITIES (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WARREN CITY AND YOUNGVILLE BOROUGH) TO ADOPT THE COUNTY'S PARK, RECREATION AND GREENWAYS PLAN AS THEIR OWN.

Most of the municipalities in the County do not have the staff or capacity to develop and utilize their own park and recreation plan. By adopting the County's plan as their own, they will have some direction for parks and recreation at the local level. The County can take the role of assisting these municipalities by conducting an annual survey of all communities to prioritize recreation projects. This should be done in the fall of each year to provide enough time to prepare grants for the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), if needed, (the DCNR grant deadline is typically April of each year). Once the priorities are set, the County should further assist the municipalities with submitting grant applications, identifying partners and additional funding sources/ donations to allow these priority projects to occur.

ACTION 1.2B. ASSIST MUNICIPALITIES WITH REGULATIONS AS THEY RELATE TO ORDINANCES AND CONSERVATION.

County staff can help local municipalities by providing assistance in a variety of ways. For example, a municipality may need help to update land use regulations, or by providing model language or sample ordinances. The County could keep a library of best practices and model ordinances to share with municipalities as needed.

It is through ordinances, like zoning or SALDO, that the community can regulate how property is developed, and hence, how green and open spaces are protected or developed. Building in model language for recreation or fee-in-lieu for SALDO, conservation subdivisions, and greenway protection ensures development will adhere to a community's standards, which directly benefits of the residents and all of it's visitors.

ACTION 1.2.C. COORDINATE "CLEAN YOUR PARK" DAYS COUNTYWIDE

The results of "Clean Your Park" days can be seen within a couple hours and time commitment is relatively minimal. This makes "Clean Your Park" days a great project for any community. It is a great way to engage community members, especially those who like to spend time in the outdoors and want to be involved without sitting in on meetings. Children can easily get involved, too, which is a benefit for finding ways to incorporate youth.

ACTION 1.2D. PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION ONLINE

The 21st century finds many using the internet for things once searched for at libraries, or for places once found in Atlas maps. Families have increased responsibilities and often all adults in households are working. With hectic schedules and commuting challenges, more people are turning to the internet for education of all kinds. From a simple answer to a question, to a complete college degree, use of the internet ensures accessibility to educational materials anywhere, as long as a cellular or wi-fi connection exists.

There are several counties that are beginning to offer online classes. Some are designed to keep seniors in their community engaged, and others are to designed to provide distance education while remote learning with Covid-19. Some examples of this are:

- Comal County, Texas offers classes by partnering with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for family and community health. The courses are free and range from childcare, food and nutrition to environmental resources.
- Ulster, New York is offering online learning programs designed to help their seniors. The programs are free to Ulster County seniors ages 60 and over and range from healthy living topics to courses on medicine and nutrition.
- Bernalillo County, New Mexico offers a unique set of online classes and workshops for seniors. The Bernalillo County Senior and Social Services offers free online programs to County residents ages 50 and older to help them remain physically, emotionally, and mentally engaged. The types of classes range from online comedy workshops to dance classes.
- King County, Washington offers a workshop series for young people in grades 9-12. The students participate in online live sessions via Zoom on a variety of environmental topics related to parks and green space. The students also work with Parks staff in a summer internship program.

The County of Warren should consider placing educational materials online as well, such as wellness information or an entire Environmental Stewardship program. Starting with programs for seniors would be a good way to pilot the program.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 DEVELOP A MARKETING PLAN FOR PARKS AND RECREATION IN THE COUNTY.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

It was discussed throughout the planning process that not everyone is aware of all the great recreation opportunities that exist in Warren County. Additional marketing efforts are necessary to get the word out to existing residents as well as potential visitors. There are a lot of outside organizations that provide various recreation facilities and programs so some coordination will be necessary, but the County can utilize its existing outlets to help with the marketing efforts.

ACTION 1.3A. IMPROVE THE COUNTY’S ONLINE PRESENCE TO INCLUDE MUNICIPAL RECREATION INFORMATION.

According to the survey conducted with the municipalities as part of this process, only four communities in Warren County have their own websites. Additionally, only Tidioute reported having a Recreation Facebook page. The County should coordinate with the local municipalities to include recreation information, including available facilities and programs, at the municipal level on the County website. A County Recreation Facebook page should also be developed and managed through County staff to publicize parks and community events. The website and social media can be utilized to organize volunteers for cleanup/maintenance events as well.

ACTION1.3B. DEVELOP A COUNTY-WIDE BROCHURE AND/OR ONLINE MAP OF TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES.

Develop a brochure showing each of the trails within the County. Placing brochures at rest areas, city and county buildings, local businesses, and visitor centers will help attract residents and tourists. Additionally, if the technology exists, create an online map that can easily be utilized with navigation functionality.



ACTION 1.3C. USE THE NEWS MEDIA AND OTHER LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO PROMOTE THE COUNTY’S MARKETING OF ALL ITS PARKS AND RECREATION RESOURCES.

The County should continue to work with news outlets such as the Times Observer and local tv and radio stations to write articles and run stories about recreation options and events that are occurring throughout the County.

In addition, the PA Visitors Center, Allegheny National Forest Center, Chapman Dam State Park, and private enterprises can be utilized to spread the word about Warren County’s park, recreation, greenway and historic resources.

Social media can be an effective and inexpensive tool to promoting parks and recreation events as many users visit their platforms daily. Per PerfectMind, a company providing Software As A Service to Parks and Recreation communities, there are 10 quick ways to use social media to promote parks and recreation events:

- **Create Facebook Events:** This allows users to RSVP and invite others, increasing engagement.
- **Use Facebook Livestream:** Sharing information live gives users an insight and might entice them to try it for themselves.
- **Create Branded Hashtags:** This will help community members who aren’t following your account to come across the posts.
- **Live-Tweet from Events:** Live-tweeting can help raise awareness, increase engagement and draw attention to your event.
- **Promote with Stunning Visuals:** The quality of images and video are important to entice users. Shoot in natural light and avoid flash.
- **Create Instagram Stories and Highlights:** These let you display a series of videos or images that communicate a narrative and allows some pre-buzz teaser for an event.
- **Write With Urgency:** Creating posts that provide a sense of urgency in signing up for an event will encourage more participation.
- **Use Paid Social Media Ads:** If the budget allows, paying for ads can allow marketing to channels where most of the audience is.
- **Invite User Generated Content During Events:** The content created by users can be shared across social media accounts and can increase engagement.
- **Measure Your Social Media Activity:** This provides a sense of what is working, what is not, and allows a change in strategy.





GOAL 2

Provide an interconnected network of trails, greenways and open space that supports opportunities for active and passive recreation and conservation.

OBJECTIVE 2.1. CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A COUNTYWIDE TRAIL NETWORK.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Providing an interconnected network of parks, trails, greenways and additional water access would serve the residents of the county well by providing health and wellness opportunities. These facilities would also attract tourists who look for recreational adventures. Data collected from the public survey revealed that the most desired types of trails include:



- Historic walking trails
- Multi-purpose trails (hiking, biking, walking)
- Cross country skiing trails
- Hiking trails
- Mountain bike trails
- Bike parks/BMX/pump tracks

When the 2008 Warren County Greenways Plan was adopted, the only developed land trail outside of Allegheny National Forest lands was the Warren/North Warren Bike/Hike Trail. The Plan recommended several trails that the County and municipalities should pursue that are still relevant today. These trails are included here with updated information gathered from this process.

ACTION 2.1A: DETERMINE FEASIBILITY OF EXTENDING EXISTING TRAILS OR CREATING NEW TRAILS

A feasibility study for any trail project should be developed for new trails or extensions. Each study should:

- Identify current ownership along the initial alignment
- Determine interest by contacting property owners
- Identify potential alternative alignments, if necessary
- Develop an existing conditions report on the preferred alignment along with recommendations and cost estimates.

Potential trail projects include:

Warren/North Warren Hike/Bike Trail

The Warren/North Warren Hike/Bike Trail opened in 1995 and follows an old New York Central railroad branch north from the City of Warren approximately 3 miles into Conewango Township where it ends near the PA Bureau of Forestry Arboretum with picnic areas, a garden, parking and restrooms. The trail is sufficiently removed from the highway, creating a buffer from traffic. The County has secured an additional 1/2 mile of land to extend the trail further north. Consideration should be given to extend the trail from its current endpoint to the New York state line to eventually link to the Chautauqua Trail.

The City of Warren has developed their own Parks and Recreation Plan, but the County should coordinate with them to market the Walkable Warren trail map to illustrate the alignment within the City.



Brokenstraw Bike/Hike Trail

Currently this trail is 2 miles in length and wraps around the southern boundary of Brokenstraw Creek within the Borough of Youngsville. Consideration should be given to extend approximately 8.3 miles from Borough of Youngsville to the City of Warren, along the Allegheny River and Brokenstraw Creek, following an active Allegheny and Eastern Railroad line. Future extensions should include connecting to Buckaloons Recreation Area.

Tidioute Riverside Rec Trail

The Tidioute Trail is 3.8 miles and runs adjacent to the Allegheny River between Tidioute and Buckaloons Recreation Area. Connecting this trail to the Warren/North Warren Hike/Bike Trail would provide the opportunity to expand the trail network regionally and offers potential to link the City of Warren with Oil City in Venango County and eventually link the Allegheny National Forest with large population centers such as the City of Pittsburgh.

Warren to Kinzua Dam Trail

A feasibility study could help to determine the potential to link the City of Warren to the Kinzua Dam. Options include widening the shoulder along Route 59 or following Hemlock Road (this option would require permission to cross the dam). There is additional potential to link to the mountain bike trail system at Jake's Rocks.

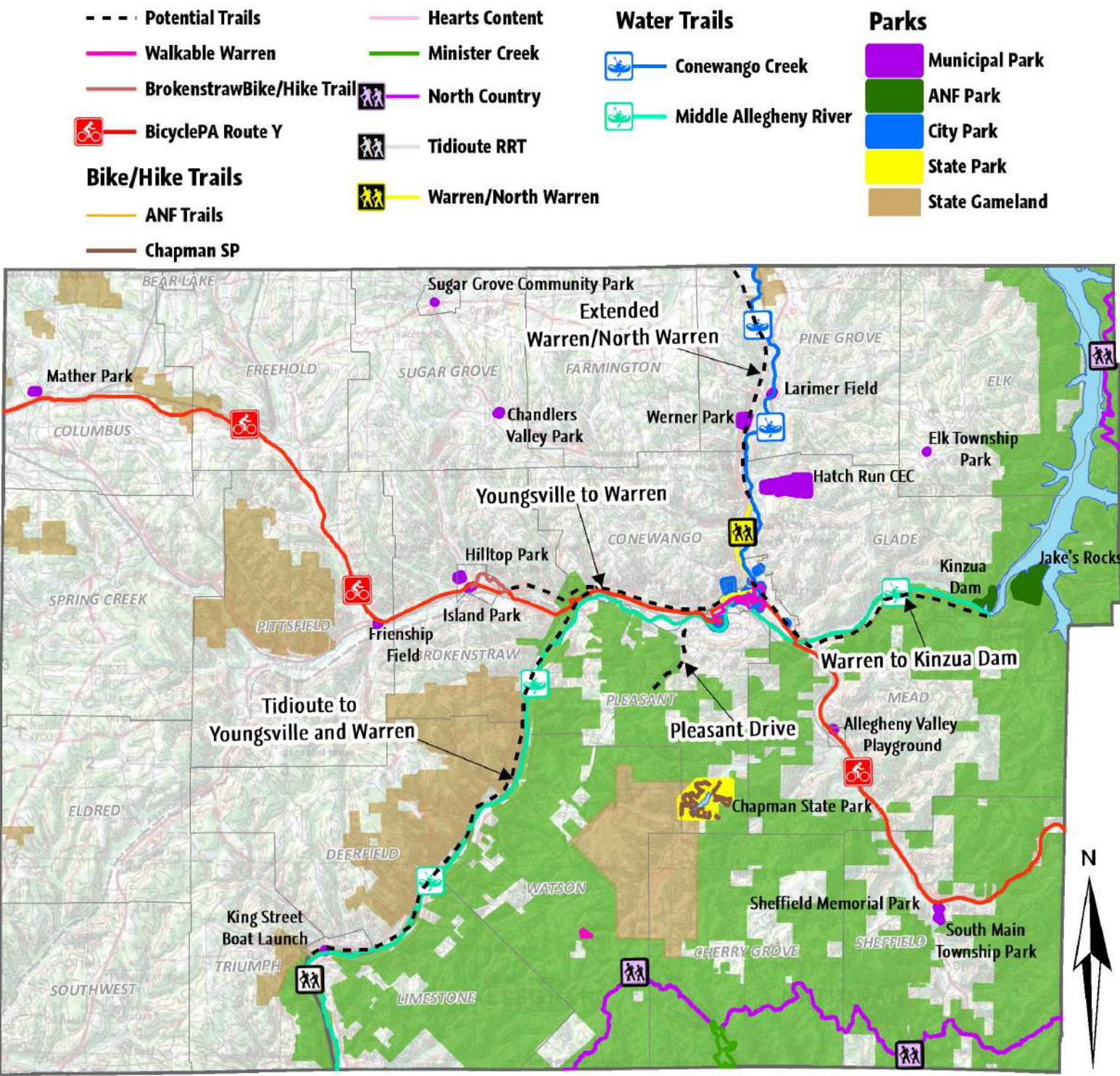
ACTION 2.1B: WORK WITH MUNICIPALITIES ON POTENTIAL TRAILS

- Several options were identified during the planning process that would help to extend and/or create local/municipal trail systems. These options include:
- Deerfield and Mead Townships have a large number of abandoned railroad beds. Work should be done to determine the surface ownership of those abandoned railroad beds and a feasibility study should be conducted to determine the possibility of building trails along these abandoned lines. Cooperation with PennDOT will need to occur as well.
 - Pine Grove Township officials are looking to extend the rails to trails from Russell to the New York state line along Old Route 62. There are approximately 2 miles along the abandoned railroads where ownership becomes an issue. The option to travel along nearby roads from Russell is being considered. This road travels along the Conewango Creek into Russell. The next mile would need to travel along Old Route 62 and requires a widened shoulder before joining back up to the abandoned railroad.
 - Pleasant Township supervisors are interested in creating a bike trail along Pleasant Drive (Rt 337). This trail would start from Warren City and travel the first 2 1/2 miles to the south. It would need widening and paving of the road shoulders and needs PennDOT cooperation.

ACTION 2.1C: PARTNER WITH THE ALLEGHENY NATIONAL FOREST TO EXTEND JAKE'S ROCKS TRAILS

Jakes Rocks is very popular mountain bike trail system within the Allegheny National Forest utilized by both locals and tourists. The area is located off Longhouse National Scenic Byway and has 30 + miles of expertly designed adventure mountain bike trails. Since mountain biking is one of the fastest growing outdoor recreation activities, extending the system would provide additional opportunities for this unique trail experience.

WARREN COUNTY PARKS & TRAILS MAP



OBJECTIVE 2.2. PROVIDE MORE PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE COUNTY'S WATERWAYS.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

As discussed in the 2008 Greenways Plan, the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership brings together multiple agencies to encourage the development and enhancement of Pennsylvania water trails. According to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, "Water trails link recreation and conservation efforts".

Warren County has numerous waterways that are prime for improving and expanding water access for the County and the local communities where they are located. These include the Allegheny River, Conewango Creek, Brokenstraw Creek, Kinzua Creek, Tionesta Creek, and the Kinzua Reservoir. Water access exists along many of these waterways including Conewango Creek Water Trail, boating opportunities on the Kinzua Reservoir and multiple boat launches along the Allegheny River.

Although 45% of respondents to the county-wide survey, conducted during the planning process, indicated that their needs were either fully or partially met with current boat launches, public access, and fishing locations, the survey indicated many areas they felt were lacking. Multiple respondents mentioned enhancement of canoe and kayak launches and facilities were needed, specifically at Breezpoint Landing. Other locations are discussed below.

ACTION 2.2A. INVESTIGATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP ADDITIONAL WATER ACCESS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.

- Pine Grove Township received a grant to revitalize Larimer Park near Russell. The work will begin spring 2021 and includes installation of a cement pad, picnic tables, a gazebo, and a boat launch. The boat launch will be located 500 feet north of the Liberty Street Bridge on Conewango Creek.
- Pleasant Township is flanked by the Allegheny River on its entire northern and western borders. The possibilities of creating access along the almost 10 miles of river frontage are numerous and the township should examine locations that might be suitable for river access development.
- Respondents to the countywide survey indicated two areas that they would like to see additional water access developed near the City of Warren. Both of these areas are off the Allegheny River near the Rt 6 and 59 intersection and are across river from one another. The first location is near Glade Bridge and adjacent to Warren Eagles Club, and the second is at the Dairy Delite by the youth baseball fields. The county should examine the feasibility of creating water access in at least one of these locations.
- Another location survey respondents indicated an interest in developing water access was along Big Four Road which follows the eastern side of Conewango Creek in Pine Grove Township and lies south of the Larimer Park water access being developed by the Township.

PRIMARY WATERWAY ACCESS POINTS

- ▲ Water Access
- ▲ Water Access w/ Boat Ramp
- ▲ Potential Future Access



OBJECTIVE 2.3. PROMOTE WINTER ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.

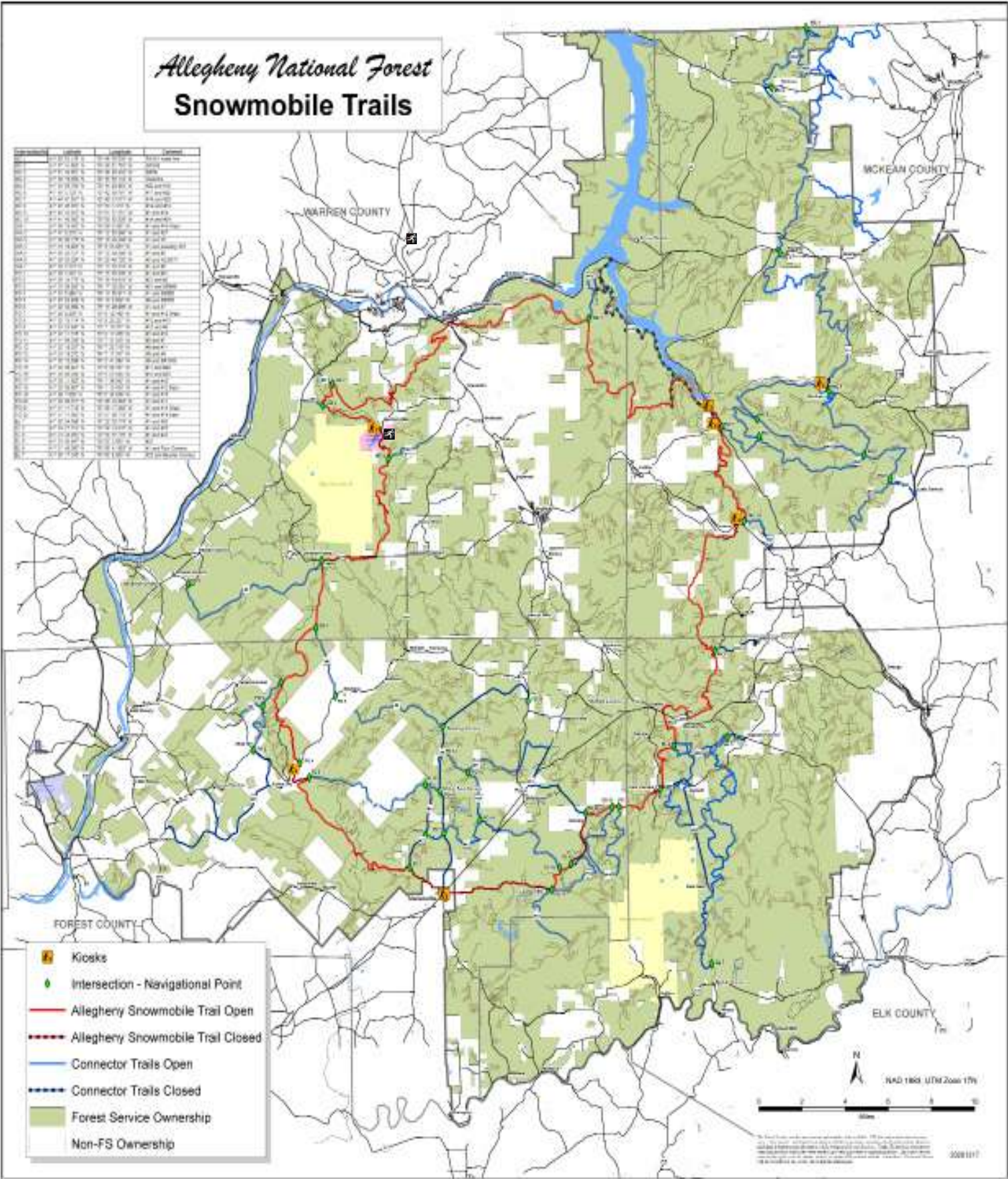
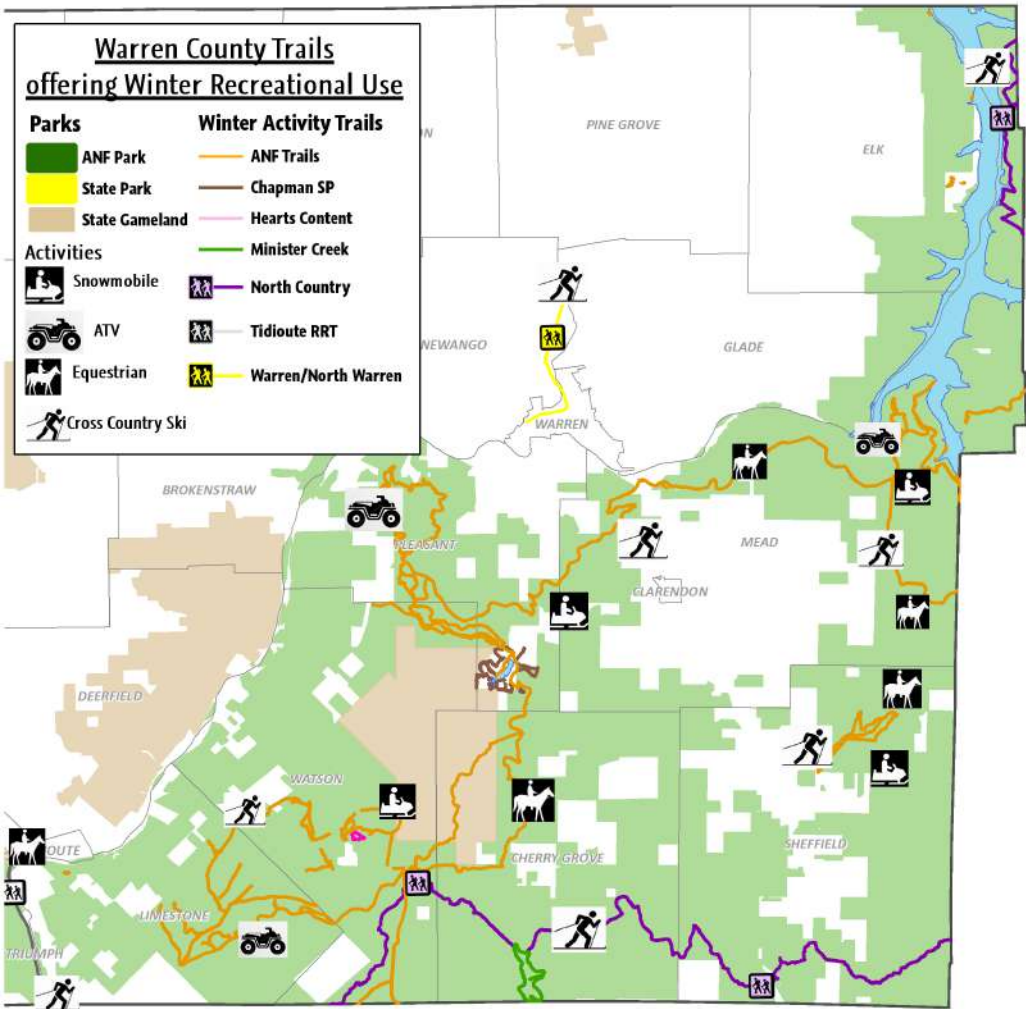
WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Winter is that time of year when people naturally slow down and tend to stay inside due to the cold temperature. However, winter activities in Warren County are plentiful, and with a full season of opportunities, it is important to promote winter recreation. Winter activities, like cross country skiing, sledding, snowmobiling and simple walks can have health benefits like increasing resting metabolism rates, helping the body produce vitamin D, and curing the winter blues.

Some of the many winter activities within Warren County include snowmobiling, ATV use, equestrian riding, and cross-country skiing. Many of the trails within the Allegheny National Forest allow all these recreational uses and have extensive mileage dedicated to these. With over 600 miles of trails for hiking, biking, and backpacking use, 50% can also be utilized for snowmobile recreational use and 100 miles for ATV use. Even though it might not be obvious, equestrian trails can also be used in the winter. A list of the stables in Warren County is included in the appendices. The map on page 43 shows the extensive snowmobile trails within the ANF and the map below shows which trails allow various winter recreational uses.

ACTION 2.3A. ACTIVELY PROMOTE WINTER ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY BY INITIATING A WINTER RECREATION THEMED CAMPAIGN.

The County should develop a winter recreation campaign to get people outside during the winter months. This can be done by partnering with local recreation clubs and businesses that cater to uses such as snowmobiles, cross-country skiing, ATVs and equestrian use. Club members/local business owners could be asked to lead an activity each month on the trails, which can be promoted through social media. This also serves to get more residents and tourists to support local clubs and businesses that exist.



OBJECTIVE 2.4. DEVELOP ADDITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Results from the public survey completed during this planning process reveal that over 90% of the respondents feel parks and recreation facilities and programs are important to maintaining a high quality of life in Warren County. Of those respondents, around 65% indicated a need for more trails as well as parks and recreation programs in the county. And over 70% felt that a combination of donations and county tax dollars should be utilized to fund parks and recreation in Warren County. The County currently does not provide recreation facilities (other than the Warren/North Warren Trail) or programs. The survey data supports the need for the County to further examine this.

Currently, the County partners with local municipalities and other recreation providers to provide a system of regional parks. Expanding the recreation areas within the county by expanding and developing partnerships with other county organizations would provide more opportunities for recreation.

ACTION 2.4A. IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN THAT WAS COMPLETED FOR THE FORMER COUNTY LANDFILL AND ADJACENT GIRL SCOUT BIRDSALL EDEY CAMP.

This 398-acre site is comprised of the 126-acre County landfill (currently owned by the Allegheny National Forest and ceased landfill operations in 1992) and the adjacent 272-acre former Girl Scout Camp. The site is located southeast of the City of Warren, extending from the Allegheny River to a mountain top along Grunderville Road and can be accessed from Route 62. The former landfill portion has been capped and has potential for other uses.

A PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant was awarded in December 2020 to create a conceptual site plan for the site, which is included in the appendix of this plan. Options for recreation that were explored are listed below. The county should also continue to discuss options with ANF to either gain site control or lease the landfill site.

- River access
- Amphitheater space
- Disc golf
- Redevelopment of Girl Scout cabins for indoor programming
- Sport and multi-use fields
- Parking and restrooms
- Nature trails, botany and wildlife programs
- Nature play areas
- Outdoor recreation
- Festival space



ACTION 2.4B. PARTNER WITH ALLEGHENY NATIONAL FOREST (ANF) TO DEVELOP A PLAYGROUND AT KINZUA BEACH.

Kinzua Beach is located on the Kinzua Reservoir and offers swimming (no lifeguards), a sandbox and a mowed grassy area available for sunbathing and play. The beach is currently underutilized. A playground at the beach would provide an additional facility to draw local users and visitors to this area.

ACTION 2.4C. PURSUE PARTNERSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN THE COUNTY TO ENHANCE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES.

As part of the process numerous recreation organizations and local businesses were interviewed to gather information for the plan. All of the stakeholders indicated an interest in partnering with the County in the development of recreation in the region and most indicated that they have partnered with the County in the past. Based on the information collected during the process, including the results from the public survey, the types of recreation most popular in the County includes: biking, hiking, canoeing/kayaking and nature oriented programs. Therefore, the County should focus on expanding and forming partnerships with organizations and businesses that cater to these areas as well as those that can assist with marketing efforts. Those include but may not be limited to:

- Allegheny Outfitters: canoeing/kayaking, biking, hiking
- Conewango Kayak and Canoe: rentals and water excursions
- Warren County Chamber of Business and Industry: water access, biking and various events
- Warren County Conservation District: Hiking, biking and various outdoor programs
- Allegheny National Forest: Variety of outdoor facilities and programming
- Allegheny Outdoor Club: Kayaking, hiking, fishing, cross country skiing
- Chapman Dam State Park - Large variety of outdoor educational programming
- Warren County Master Gardener Program: Educational classes
- Warren County 4-H: Educational programs
- Warren County Visitor Bureau: Marketing

A full list of the stakeholders interviewed is located on page 21.

As the County examines it’s role in providing parks and recreation facilities, a look at what each local community offers is important to determine if some areas are underserved. Below is a look at the facilities within each municipality. Recommendations for individual parks can be found in the appendices.

Municipality	Local Facility(s) Name		Water Access
Bear Lake Boro			
Brokenstraw Twp	Wilder Field	Rouse Warren County Home	Yes - Allegheny River
Cherry Grove Twp	Cherry Grove Park		
Clarendon Boro	Clarendon Area Playground VFW Park		
Columbus Twp	Columbus Elementary School Playground & Ballfields Mather Park		
Conewango Twp	North Warren Community Ballfields North Warren Community Park North Warren VFD Plummer Ballfields	Starbrick VFD Warren County Minor League Softball Warren State Hospital Soccer Fields	
Deerfield Twp	Garland VFD		
Eldred Twp	Grand Valley Park Grand Valley VFD Wesley Woods Christian Camp		
Elk Twp	Elk Township Park		
Farmington Twp	Eisenhower School Fields Lander Methodist Church Playground		
Freehold Twp	Freehold Township Park		
Glade Twp	Hatch Run Conservation Center		Yes - Conewango Creek
Limestone Twp	American Legion River Run		
Mead Twp	Jake’s Rocks Trails Ron Johnson Field Smith Complex Ballfields		Yes - Allegheny River
Pine Grove Twp	Conewango Kayak& Canoe Larimer Park	Warren County School District Central administration Office Playground Werner Park	Yes - Conewango Creek

Municipality	Local Facility(s) Name		Water Access
Pittsfield Twp	Friendship Field Ballfields Pittsfield Playground Warren County Fairgrounds		
Pleasant Twp			
Sheffield Twp	Sheffield Memorial Park Sheffield Music Boosters Field Rotary Park	SAMSHS Sports Complex Tionesta Creek Access Area Tionesta Park	Yes - Tionesta Creek
Southwest Twp			
Spring Creek Twp	Spring Creek Playground		
Sugar Grove Boro	Sugar Grove Community Park Sugar Grove Free Methodist Church Play Area Sugar Grove Library	Sugar Grove Playground Sugar Grove VFD	
Sugar Grove Twp	Chandlers Valley Park		
Tidioute Boro	Benner Park Charter School Playground Picture Show Park Riverside Park	Tidioute Ballfield Tidioute Community Charter School Tidioute Hike/Bike Trail	Yes - Allegheny River
Triumph Twp			
Warren City	Art Kelsey Park Beaty Park Beaty Warren Middle School Betts Park Breeze Point Landing Carbon Park Celeron Park Clemons Park Crescent Park DeFrees Park Joseph Warren Park	Lacey Park Morck Park Mulberry Park PA Avenue West Greenway Point Park Soldier & Sailors Park The Point Fountain War Memorial Field Warren Bike Trail Washington Park Wetmore Park	
Watson Twp			
Youngsville Boro	American Legion Field Division Street Field Hill Top Park Recreation Area Island Park Recreation Area	Fishing Pond Youngsville Elementary/ Middle School Youngsville High School Field	



OBJECTIVE 3.1. DEVELOP A PLAN TO PROVIDE PROGRAMMING AT THE COUNTY LEVEL WHILE IMPLEMENTING LOCALLY.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Warren County has a vast park network; however, with the exception of the Warren/North Warren Bike/Hike Trail, none are owned or managed by the County. Parks and recreation in the County can be classified into regional facilities and local facilities. Regional facilities are those owned and managed by federal and state agencies, designed to attract visitors from all over such as the Allegheny National Forest, Chapman State Park, PA State Game Lands and Hatch Run Conservation Education Center. Local facilities are those owned and managed by local municipalities and/or school districts, fire departments and YMCA and are designed to serve the residents in the immediate area.

Since the County does not have direct control over the majority of recreation facilities, it is important to find ways to stay in contact and work with the entities that own these facilities. Developing a plan at the County level that is implemented locally would provide the best chance of success moving forward with recreation in Warren County.

ACTION 3.1A. COORDINATE MULTI-MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES WITH LARGER MUNICIPAL AREAS.

Communities such as Russell, Sugar Grove, Youngsville, Tidioute, Sheffield and Columbus are viable options for the County to partner with when providing recreation options and programs. Due to the lack of staff or capacity for many communities to research and pursue grants, if a Program Director is hired, they could assist in that pursuit for the municipalities by identifying opportunities, co-authoring the applications, and administration upon award.

Some of the opportunities in these areas include:

- Educational and Social Programs
- Events and Festivals
- River access
- Amphitheater space
- Disc golf
- Redevelopment of Girl Scout cabins for indoor programming
- Sport and multi-use fields
- Parking and restrooms
- Nature trails, botany and wildlife programs
- Nature play areas
- Outdoor recreation

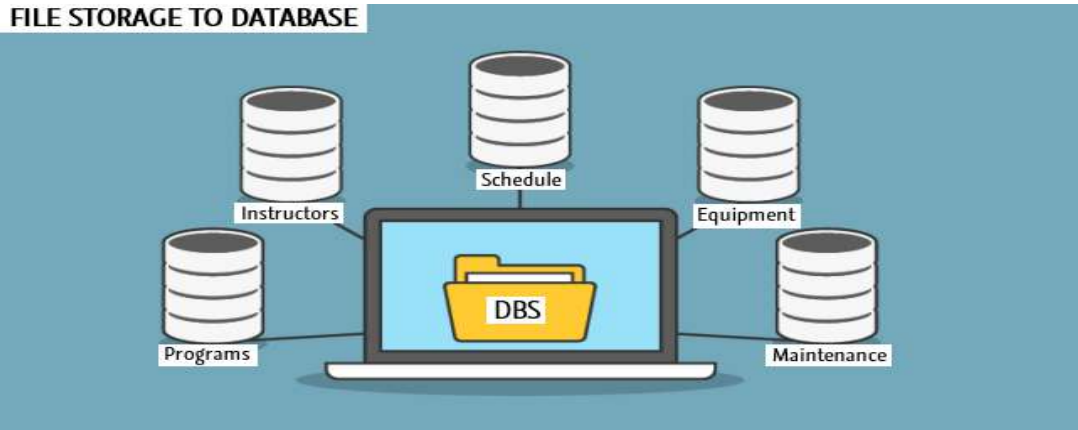
PROMOTE, COORDINATE AND PROVIDE RECREATION PROGRAMS THAT SERVE REGIONAL NEEDS

ACTION 3.1B. COORDINATE WITH THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO ENHANCE MORE PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES, ESPECIALLY NATURE EDUCATION AND OTHER OUTDOOR PROGRAMS.

The mission of the Warren County Conservation District (WCCD) is to improve the environmental quality of Warren County by promoting the wise use, enhancement, and understanding of natural resources. Engaging community members, especially youth, is important to a sustainable future of conservation. The Warren County Conservation District provides hands on programs, demonstrations, and workshops. Partnering with the WCCD will bring a heightened awareness to the environmental issues at the county level and provide education that enables students to help solve these issues.

ACTION 3.1C. DEVELOP A DATABASE OF POTENTIAL RECREATION PROGRAMS BASED ON AVAILABILITY OF EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUCTORS.

Keeping an active database of potential programs, including updates as to what works and doesn't work allows users to quickly query, correlate, and report the collected information rather than spending time trying to recall it. It is easy to become overwhelmed with information, and creating a database that is continuously updated will create one place for all the information rather than several locations or people. The database can be as simple as a flat file, like an Excel spreadsheet, or it can start or evolve into a relational database, like SQL, which allows you to join several single files into a large database. See image below for depiction of converting several different files to a database.



ACTION 3.1E. WORK WITH THE CITY OF WARREN TO EXPAND THEIR PLAYGROUND PROGRAM COUNTYWIDE.

The City of Warren operates a Playground Program during the summer months for children ages 7-14 (children under 7 need to be accompanied and supervised by an adult). The registered participants of the program enjoy daily activities such as sports, arts, and games which are provided for free. Currently, there are 3 city parks that host the program: Beaty, Crescent, and Lacy. Once restrictions are lifted in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic, expanding the program to countywide parks would be beneficial. This will allow residents outside of the city to take advantage of summer activities for their children.

ACTION 3.1F. CONSIDER DEVELOPING OR PARTNERING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO OFFER RECREATION PROGRAMS

Respondents to the public survey that was conducted as part of the planning process indicated the following types of programs where of interest. The County does not currently offer programming, but opportunities exist to partner with other organizations, including the stakeholders listed on page 17, to develop these types of programs in the County. The County should contact stakeholders and potential partners on a quarterly or annual basis to determine interest and update program offerings.

- Computer programming: In a digital age where so much of our world is automated, and our reliance on technology increases, people are looking for more ways to understand it instead of simply passively consuming it. Programming does not have to be hard to learn, and offering programs would be a great benefit to the community.
- Specialized programs for ADA: There are a variety of ways to keep residents with disabilities engaged in the community. Fun activities range from cooking and art to nature walks and visits with pets. There are also ways to help residents with disabilities by providing them with education and job related skills.
- Fitness/wellness programs: Per the Center for Disease Control (CDC), a healthy community is a prepared community and working at this level will bring the greatest health benefits to the greatest amount of people. Fitness programs can be seasonal and even take advantage of the outdoors with activities such as yoga in the park or snowshoeing. Wellness programs can also be audience specific, such as parenting skills or retirement planning education.
- Special events and festivals: Enjoying music with others can create a sense of social togetherness. Music in the park, talent shows, and festivals are all extremely beneficial for communities. Other special events such as gardening days, races, arts and crafts festivals, and organized canoe or kayak trips can provide options to experience social togetherness.
- Gardening: Community gardening has many benefits, including increasing mental health, improving upon food security, increasing dietary habits through education, strengthening community ties, re-purposing blighted properties, and more. Although community gardens often take a lot of work, the benefits are numerous.
- Environmental stewardship: Environmental stewardship refers to responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices. Offering programs where residents can become unofficial environmental stewards promotes a pride of self and community. A good place to start is with youth by offering a junior environmental steward complete with reciting an oath and receiving a badge.



WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

The goal of any planning process should be to develop a plan that is easy to use, relevant and implementable. Warren County’s Park, Recreation and Greenways Plan was developed with these items in mind. The planning process included a public outreach process, data collection and developing recommendations/action items. These are discussed throughout the document, but this section focuses on implementation.

An implementation matrix can be found on the following pages. It was developed to provide a roadmap for those who are implementing the plan. For each of the action items identified in the plan, additional information is provided in terms of :

- Responsible Party
- Potential Partners
- Estimated Cost
- Timeframe
- Reference Pages

This matrix will also make it easier to track progress for each of the action items. Funding sources for the various action items can be found in the Appendices.

WHAT COMES NEXT?